

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex Request for Interest (RFI)

The Kennedy Space Center (KSC) is in the initial planning phase for solicitation of proposals for operation and future development of the KSC Visitor Complex (KSCVC). The KSCVC is operated and maintained as a concession business activity. The current concession agreement ends April 30, 2010. KSC is seeking industry ideas, concepts, and comments for optimizing KSCVC mission objectives, operations, development, and long-term vitality for both NASA and the Concessioner. Comments are solicited regarding KSC's vision, constraints, and conditions regarding the KSCVC concession.

Objectives of the RFI:

1. Communicate to industry KSC's vision for operation of the KSCVC business, including current requirements and future constraints and conditions.
2. Identify potential Concessioners.
3. Promote competition among leaders in the industry.
4. Solicit feedback from industry for potential capital investments, innovations, and improvements to the KSCVC and/or other associated and supportive, but separately operated, businesses in close proximity.
5. Identify industry concerns and conditions considered important to a successful concession activity for both NASA and the Concessioner. In particular, KSC seeks feedback on the optimal term of a concession agreement compatible with investment expectations.

NASA/KSC's Vision for the KSCVC:

KSC understands that the KSCVC concession activity is a commercial business opportunity. However, Government concessions are also intended to serve a public interest and shall be conducted with an equal or greater emphasis on the public interest as on affording the Concessioner a reasonable opportunity to a reasonable profit commensurate with the capital invested and the obligations assumed. The general statutory authority for NASA visitor complex concession activities is intended to facilitate "visitors to the several installations of the administration and, in connection therewith, to provide services incident to the dissemination of information concerning its activities to such visitors." Potential Concessioners must realize that the KSCVC concession business activity will be conducted to reflect the mission objectives of this authority. Specifically, while profitability considerations must be acknowledged in operation of the KSCVC concession, they must always be considered in the context of the optimal way to fulfill KSC's vision and mission for its visitor complex.

KSCVC Vision Statement:

“To tell the NASA Story and to inspire all people to support the exploration of space.”

KSCVC Mission Objectives:

To provide visitors with:

- A high-quality, one-day, immersive experience that is both educational and entertaining and results in the visitor being enthusiastic about sharing what they learned with others.
- A clearer understanding of how and why America explores space.
- A clearer and deeper appreciation of the benefits derived from the activities of the past and the opportunities of the future.
- A sense of excitement for space exploration and an awareness of the importance of the space program in our national and global society.
- Educational workshops and activities geared toward educator professional development and student STEM content learning (STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) based on NASA’s mission.
- A strong sense of value received for the cost of the experience

Examples of Desired Improvements:

- Live interpretation/expanded communicator role
- Curatorial expertise and/or professional artifact management program
- Data-driven Customer Satisfaction Program
- Customer Service Call Center
- Expanded bus fleet
- Comprehensive maintenance program
- All-inclusive surveillance plan system
- Electronic reporting system for contract deliverables
- Maintain or exceed current level of contributions to the Reinvestment Trust Funds
- Annual audit of KSCVC financials by independent accounting firm.
- National and/or international venues for execution of marketing strategies

- Foundation and sponsorship support of educational activities and workshops for teachers and students to foster increased national focus on teaching and learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Constraints:

- NASA retains approval rights for:
 - Pricing policy including admission and event ticket prices
 - Marketing promotions
 - Sponsorships
 - News releases
 - Use of NASA insignia
 - Program content
 - Capital development and improvement projects
 - Operating hours and procedures
 - Educational program content
 - Other activities as required by law or Agency policy and defined in the solicitation
- Title to all personal and real property shall remain and/or vest with the Government. Exceptions for “free standing” development may be considered.
- Labor rates must be in compliance with Department of Labor regulations including Service Contract Act and Davis-Bacon Act.
- All development and presentational themes shall reflect NASA’s and/or KSC’s achievements, space activities, and goals.

Conditions:

- The selected Concessioner will manage and operate KSCVC facilities, systems, and equipment as a self-supporting entity but within the boundaries of, and in accordance with, NASA/KSC vision and mission statements and the policies and procedures as specified in the concession agreement. Additionally, it is expected that the Concessioner will manage and operate the KSCVC business in a manner with a primary concern for its indefinite viability and vitality for the benefit of visitors to KSC.

- Subject to NASA approval, the Concessioner will be granted the right to conduct all such income-producing activities it considers necessary and appropriate for the profitable accomplishment of KSC's vision and mission objectives for the KSCVC concession business.
- KSCVC tour and program activities are subject to NASA mission needs and operational constraints resulting from safety and/or security restrictions and NASA, Air Force, and/or commercial launches or other events (e.g., hurricanes).
- All existing KSCVC facilities, systems, and equipment will be provided as Government-furnished property to the Concessioner for conduct of the concession business.
- NASA will provide only those minimal, nonreimbursable services identified in the concession agreement.
- The solicitation will require potential Concessioners to include a master development plan as part of their proposal, presenting the projects and improvements, schedule, cost, and funding mechanism(s) covering at least the period from award plus five years. It is expected that the plan would include as a minimum a facility/attraction to house a Shuttle orbiter and relocation of the Astronaut Hall of Fame to the main visitor complex campus. The plan should be limited to creating and sustaining a high quality, high-value, one-day visitor experience at reasonable prices. Alternative plans based upon a multiday experience can be offered if they include some form of reduced cost, single-day visitor opportunity.
- Respondents to this RFI may suggest project development separate and distinct from the KSCVC concession agreement that would be compatible with the KSCVC, its vision, and mission and which would enhance its attractiveness. Any such suggestions should include a description of the desired terms and conditions considered appropriate.

Submission of information and expressions of interest:

Industry written comments and expressions of interest are requested no later than February 24, 2009, and should be sent to the Point of Contact identified below. Electronic submissions are highly encouraged. Industry comments, concerns, and recommendations will be a significant consideration in structuring a successor concession agreement for the KSCVC. Contract documents are available at the following Web link:

http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/about/foia/delaware-north_index.html

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